

PLATE 1. THE GREAT FRIGATE





## DIOMEDEA CULMINATA, *Gould.*

### Culminated Albatros.

*Diomedea culminata*, Gould in Ann. and Mag. of Nat. Hist., vol. xiii. p. 361.

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THIS species appears to be more plentiful in the Australian seas than elsewhere; numbers came under my notice during a voyage from Launceston to Adelaide, particularly off Capes Jervis and Northumberland; I frequently encountered it between Sydney and the northern extremity of New Zealand, and it also occurs in the same latitude of the Indian Ocean as abundantly as any of its congeners. It is a powerful bird, and is directly intermediate between *Diomedea chlororhynchos* and *D. cauta*. The specific differences of the three species are so apparent, that I had no difficulty whatever in distinguishing them while on the wing. In *chlororhynchos* the bill is more compressed laterally, the culmen is round, and the yellow colouring terminates in an obtuse point midway between the nostrils and the base; while in *culminata* the culmen is broad and flat, and has its greyish yellow colouring continued of the same breadth to the base; the feet of the latter are also fully a third larger than those of the former.

The habits, mode of life, and the kind of food partaken of by the *D. culminata*, are so precisely similar to those of its congeners, that a separate description would be a mere repetition of what has already been said respecting the preceding species.

Back, wings and tail dark greyish black, the latter with white shafts; head and neck white, washed with greyish black; round the eye a mark of greyish black, interrupted by a streak of white immediately below the lower part of the lid; rump, upper tail-coverts and all the under surface pure white; bill black; the culmen horn-colour; and the edge of the basal three-fourths of the edge of the under mandible orange.

In the youthful state the head and neck are dark grey, and the bill is of an almost uniform brownish black, with only an indication of the lighter colour of the culmen.

The figure is about two-thirds of the natural size.